

Parsons Nursery, Civilian Conservation
Corps Blacksmith Shop
South side of U.S. Route 219, .25 miles
southeast of Parsons
Parsons Vicinity
Tucker County
West Virginia

HABS No. WV-237-R

HABS
WVA
47-PARS.V,
IR-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY
MID-ATLANTIC REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19106

HABS
WVA
47-PARS.V,
IR-

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY

HABS No. WV-237-R
PARSONS NURSERY, Civilian Conservation Corps Blacksmith Shop

Location: South side of U. S. Route 219, .25 miles east of Parsons, Tucker County, West Virginia

USGS Parsons Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 17.614837.4327560

Present Owner: Monongahela National Forest
Department of Agriculture
Sycamore Street, Box 1548
Elkins, WV 26241

Last Occupant: Forest Service

Last Use: Storage

Significance: The Civilian Conservation Corps blacksmith shop and the Civilian Conservation Corps garage are the sole surviving buildings of the Civilian Conservation Corps Camp Parsons, designated number 518 and one of the first Camp established in Monongahela National Forest in the spring and summer of 1933. This building survives largely intact, displaying its historic character except for structural and some material damages sustained during a flood in early November, 1985. From the closing of Camp Parsons in 1941 until the present, this building has used for storage by the Parsons Nursery or the Forest Service. For an overview of Parsons Nursery, see HABS No. WV-237.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1933, according to an interview with John King, chief of silviculture for this camp during the CCC era.
2. Architect: Neither architect nor landscape architect are known.
3. Original and subsequent owners:
 - 1933 Constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps Camp Parsons.
 - 1941 Turned over to Parsons Nursery, Monongahela National Forest at the close of Camp Parsons.
 - 1951 Leased to Parsons Nursery, Department of Conservation (later Department of Natural Resources), State of West Virginia.
 - 1985 Used for storage after the State of West Virginia ended its contract to lease the Parsons Nursery.
4. Builder: This blacksmith shop was constructed by and for the Civilian Conservation Corps members of Camp Parsons.
5. Original Plans: None.
6. Alterations and additions: In 1941, the building may have been altered and moved from its original site. The building was damaged by flooding in November, 1985. Then this building moved off its foundation and the bank of the slough behind the building cut under the building. To be demolished: 1990.

B. Historical Context:

The few buildings from Camp Parsons that were not dismantled in the mid-1940s by the Parsons Nursery staff were altered for use by the nursery. The use of this building is not certain but, according to John King, appears to be the blacksmith shop for Camp Parsons. It was constructed in either 1933 or 1934. It stood on the east side of the lane that ran north-south through the Camp at the south end of the Camp. There the blacksmith repaired and sharpened tools used by members of the Camp. Tools needing work were left in the drop-down window to the left of the door at the end of the work day. The smith was kept busy by the considerable need for sharp, repaired and adapted tools for use in road and

bridge work, telephone line construction, reforestation, fire break construction, and fire fighting.

The Parsons Nursery, both under the Forest Service and the State of West Virginia, used the building for storage.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: This blacksmith shop building is typical of Civilian Conservation Corps construction in West Virginia, a one-story gable roof building. CCC buildings utilized readily available lumber stock in structures with board-and-batten exteriors with either exposed structural interiors or sheathed interiors. They were meant to be standardized, quickly constructed, unadorned and functional. Most building designs and camp layouts were relatively standard throughout the West Virginia. Because Camp Parsons had a flat site, it could conform to the regional standards both for site design and building character.
2. Condition of fabric: The building is not structurally sound. Flood damage has shifted the structure away from its foundation. The bank of the slough has undercut the back of the building, which is unsupported.

B. Description of the Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: A one story, rectangular plan, this building is 12'-3" x 16'-4". It is one bay wide and one bay deep.
2. Foundation: 8" concrete block with rubble fill where the slough bank has been washed out.
3. Walls: Exterior walls are board-and-batten composed of 3/4" x 9-1/2" boards and 1/2" x 2-3/4" battens, both of yellow pine. There are 4 1/2" plain corner boards. Sill-roof dimension at corners 7'-4-1/2", sill-peak dimension 10'-8".
4. Structural system, framing: The wall frame of "2x4's" at 48" has horizontal "2x4" nailers for the board-and-batten siding at 42-1/2" above the floor. Corner posts, doorway and window jambs and doorway head are doubled "2x4's". There is "4x6" wall sill and a wall plate of double "2x4's", 7'-0" above the floor. The roof framing is "2x6's" on 24" centers with a "1x6" ridge board. All the above framing is southern yellow pine. Three "2x4's" tie

the rafters.

5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads: None.

6. Chimneys: None.

7. Openings

a. Doorways and doors: There is one doorway on the front elevation. It has 4-1/2" jambs and head, butt-jointed with a 1/2" extension of the head beyond the jamb. The pine door has five plywood panels with 4-1/2" top style, 3-3/4" intermediate styles and a 9" bottom style, double pegged into 4" side styles.

b. Windows and shutters: The building has one window. It is triple headed with no jambs, 3-1/2" head, and 5-1/2" sill. The 3'-7" x 3'-0" board-and-batten cover drops down on the inside. There never were exterior shutters.

8. Roof: The gable roof has modern asphalt rolled roofing, three coats, over "1x6" sheathing and rafter ends exposed 18". The gable overhang is 17" with "2x4" rake boards. The roofing folds over the sheathing edge on all sides.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: The rectangular building has one room.

2. Stairways: None.

3. Flooring: The floor is poured concrete.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: The framing is exposed and unfinished.

5. Openings: The doorway has "1x4" facings; the top is missing. The jambs and doorway head are "1x6's". The window has no architrave. There is a wooden louvered vent 16" x 18", centered, just above the wall plate on the east wall. It has butt-jointed jambs and head of "1x6's". It is covered with wire cloth for a bird screen.

6. Decorative features and trim: A wooden, double door cupboard hangs in the southwest corner against the corner post and wall plate. It is 3'-7" wide, 3'-7" tall and 11" deep. It has side and top facings 2" wide, bottom facing 3" wide.

PARSONS NURSERY, Civilian Conservation Corps Blacksmith Shop
HABS No. WV-237-R (page 5)

7. Hardware: Door has one brass-plated iron hinges, 3 1/2" x 1-1/2". A surface-mounted strap hinge is a replacement for the top hinge. The door hasp and keep is modern, stamped, galvanized iron. The window has interior surface-mounted modern strap hinges.
 8. Mechanical equipment: There is neither a heating system nor plumbing nor wiring.
 9. Original furnishings: None.
- D. Site: This building survives on a severely disturbed site that shows none of its historic character. The building faces southwest, 240°.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Architectural drawings: None.
- B. Historic views: Forest Service photographs, Monongahela National Forest, Elkins, WV. Mary Gaudineer photographic copies, Monongahela National Forest, Elkins, WV. John King photograph, John King, Berea, KY.
- C. Interviews: Alvin Allison, 7-23-1989, Charleston, WV, Parsons Nursery manager, 1952-1957; Arthur (Dick) Fansler, 6-10-1989, Elkins, WV, Forest Service employee, 1946-86; Delbert Little, 6-10-1989, Elkins, WV, CCC member, Camp Parsons, 1934-42, John King, 9-5-1989, Cranberry Lake, NY, silviculture supervisor, CCC Camp Parsons, 1933-42.
- D. McKim, C. R., Monongahela National Forest History, unpublished manuscript, November, 1970.

Monongahela National Forest, Cultural Resource Survey, CCC Camps, Fire Towers, Administrative Sites, unpublished manuscript, 1986.

Otis, Alison T, William D. Honey, Thomas C. Hogg, Kimberly K. Lakin, The Forest Service and The Civilian Conservation Corps: 1933-42, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC, 1986.

Salmond, John A, The Civilian Conservation Corps, 1933-1942: A New Deal Case Study, Durham, North Carolina, Duke University Press, 1967.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

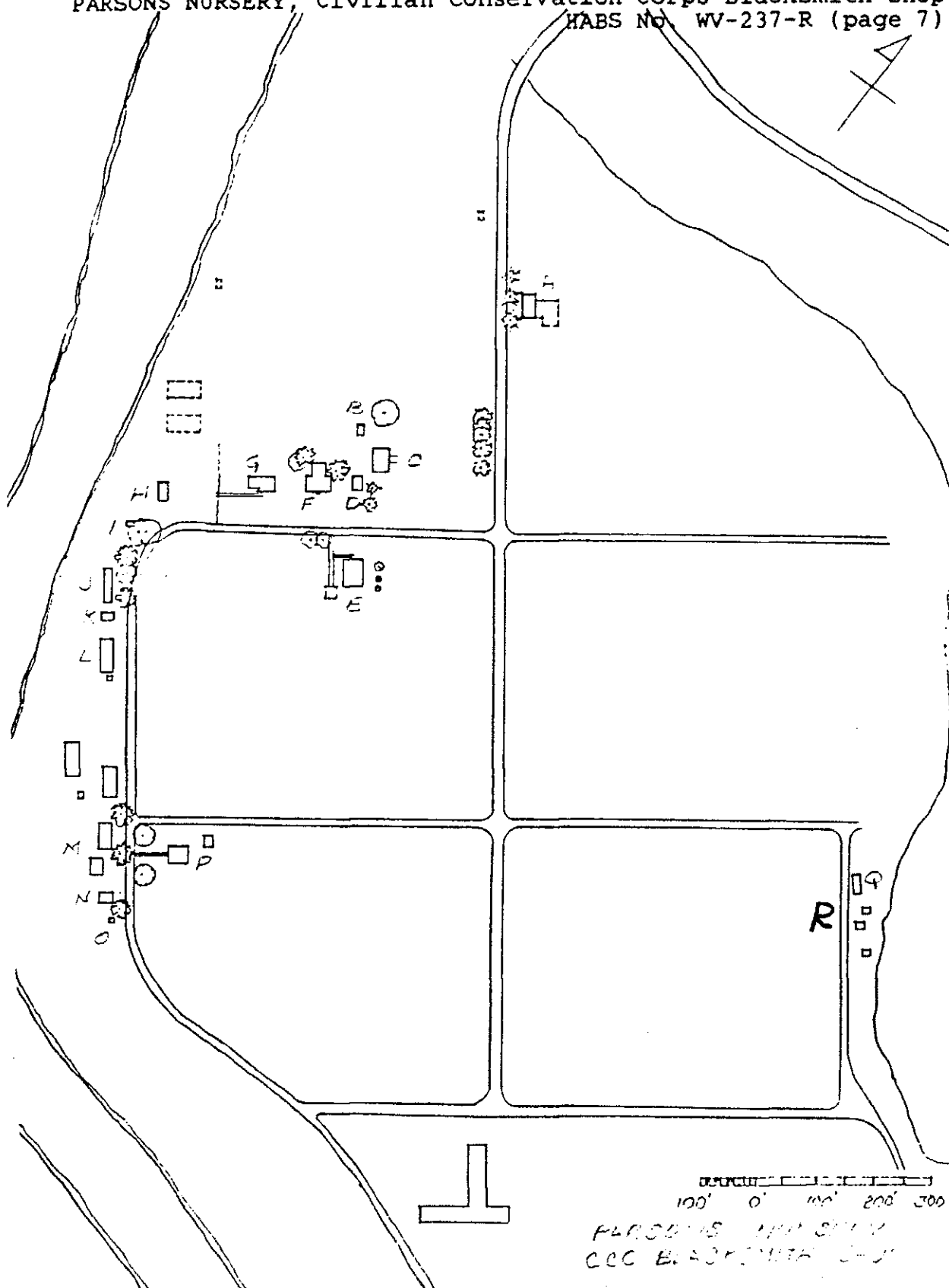
The architectural and historical documentation of the Parsons Nursery Bottom site has been undertaken to fulfill a memorandum

PARSONS NURSERY, Civilian Conservation Corps Blacksmith Shop
HABS No. WV-237-R (page 6)

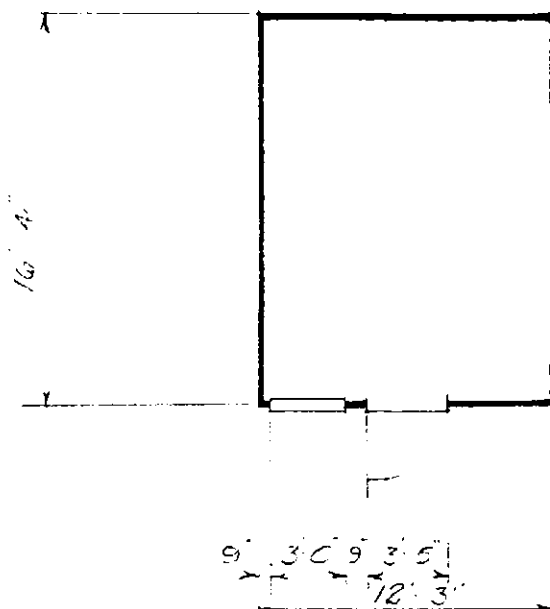
of agreement signed by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the West Virginia SHPO and the USDA Forest Service as part of requirements under regulation 36 CFR 800 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Recording is taking place prior to substantial modification and/or removal of structures damaged by a flood in November, 1985.

This documentation has been prepared by: Rebecca M. Rogers, Preservation Consultant, 44 Audubon Road, Youngstown, Ohio, under contract to Monongahela National Forest, April-November, 1989.

PARSONS NURSERY, Civilian Conservation Corps Blacksmith Shop
HABS No. WV-237-R (page 7)



PARSONS NURSERY, Civilian Conservation Corps Blacksmith Shop
HABS No. WV-237-R (page 8)



CCC

BLACKSMITH

SHOP

4 2 0 2 4 6 8 0

10-3-63